Graduate Internship – Guidance for Sites

Overview

Graduate students within the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at UW Bothell may conduct internships with non-profit organizations, public agencies, companies, institutions, and UW campus units as a means of gaining practical experience while earning course credit.

In addition to fulfilling duties defined by the internship site, students pursuing course credit are responsible for the following academic requirements:

- completing a specified number of hours
- establishing a set of learning goals
- submitting an academic product to a faculty advisor

Students are responsible for securing internships and may apply for advertised positions or design an internship in collaboration with a site. A co-designed internship should leverage the student’s skills while addressing the priorities of the organization.

Roles

Student - The graduate student brings a unique set of professional and emerging skills. Sites are encouraged to learn about the student’s background, career goals, and program of study in order to maximize the student’s capacities.

Internship Site Supervisor- The Site Supervisor is both a manager and co-educator. This person oversees the student’s duties and progress toward goals. Additionally the Site Supervisor may facilitate the development of new skills and provide mentorship around the internship’s professional sector.

Faculty Advisor- This person oversees the academic components of the internship. The Faculty Advisor assists the student in developing an internship agreement, or contract, which outlines a set learning goals and an academic product due at the completion of the internship. The student is responsible for recruiting this advisor, and this person is may be contacted to discuss the student’s progress.

Guidelines

Logistics

The student is responsible for securing the internship site and initiating and completing all steps related to the academic process. The student will request information and input from the Site Supervisor, as needed.
A primary component of the internship is the Internship Agreement form. Like a memorandum of understanding, this document outlines a set of mutually-agreed upon expectations. These include the student’s learning goals, internship duties, time parameters, and deliverables. The student and Faculty Advisor draft the internship agreement for the Site Supervisor’s review and input. All three parties give approval to the agreement by signing a hard copy or emailing their approval to Assistant Director of Graduate Programs Kate Osmond: kosmond@uwb.edu.

**Timeline**

Most internships are conducted over one 10-week quarter during Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters, or one 8-week quarter over Summer quarter. Other arrangements are permissible, and sites are encouraged to structure internships to fit their organization’s needs and capacity.

Ideally, the student will arrange the internship several weeks before the start of the quarter that s/he seeks academic credit, and the internship agreement will be completed by the first day of the quarter. The student may begin the internship before the quarter starts, provided the internship agreement is approved by all parties.

**University support**

At any time during the internship, the Site Supervisor may contact the Faculty Advisor regarding the student’s performance. If a matter cannot be addressed by the Faculty Advisor, Assistant Director of Graduate Programs Kate Osmond is available for consultation: kosmond@uwb.edu.

During the internship quarter, Alumni and Community Relations Manager Lisa Olason will contact the Site Supervisor to learn more about the internship site and to explore further opportunities for engagement with the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences and UW Bothell.

**Compensation**

Although not required to promote an internship, the UW expects that for-profit corporations will pay UW interns and strongly encourages them to do so. Paid internships encourage application, provide financial support for students while they are attending school, and may create a stronger loyalty and investment for the intern. While academic credit may be seen as an alternate form of compensation, many students do not value academic credit as a compensatory option, as they have to pay and register for academic credits. While there is no legal requirement that interns be paid, unpaid internships should be in compliance with the US Department of Labor’s ‘Test for Unpaid Interns’: http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm. Specific questions around internship payment should be directed to the site’s legal counsel.

**Orientation and Communication**

It is recommended that the site hold an orientation session to establish a shared understanding of the role and to orient the student to the organization. Depending on the work arrangement, the site supervisor and intern should establish a communications protocol that addresses how often
and when to check in on the intern’s progress. Additionally, they should determine the best modality for communication and how to address potential communication lapses.

**Evaluation**

During the final two weeks of the quarter, the student asks the Site Supervisor to complete an Intern Evaluation form, and they meet for an in-person review. The form is intended to serve as a conversation tool for reviewing the student’s strengths, accomplishments, and growing edges. The student then submits this form to the Faculty Advisor for further discussion and to assist grading purposes.

**Recommendations**

An internship offers meaningful, practical work experience related to a student’s field of study and career interests. For the site, it provides new ideas and energy, develops talent, and merits valuable contributions.

Students have much learning to glean from the Site Supervisor and colleagues at the internship site. The following are suggestions for leveraging an internship:

- Develop a thorough internship description available that clearly outlines the student’s duties, responsibilities, and expectations.
- Provide the student with opportunities for meaningful hands-on experiences which maximizes his/her expertise and emerging skills.
- As appropriate, include the intern in meetings with other staff and team members – provide exposure to multiple facets of your organization and the internship sector and network.
- Suggest relevant professional organizations that the student should consider for participation and affiliations and certifications s/he might access to be successful in your field.
- Share information about your own career path and interests, offering advice and insights.
- Conduct an exit interview to determine what went well and areas for growth. Feedback received through this process will help enhance your internship program and future intern pool.
- Stay in touch with the student after the internship experience to support his/her professional trajectory. If you have the time and interest, offer mentorship.

**Questions?** Contact Assistant Director of Graduate Programs Kate Osmond: kosmond@uwb.edu or 425-352-3406.